

**Lacey
Public Meeting
Minutes**
January 24, 2003
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Commission Members Present: Leo Gaeta, Mario Reyes, Becky Diaz, Ed Davila, Alice Castilleja-Lara, Yvonne Lopez-Morton

Commission Members Absent: Diana Avalos (excused) and Christina Guillen-Cook (unexcused)

Staff present: Antonio Ginatta and Vita Echeverria

Approval of minutes

Commissioner Lara motioned to approve minutes. Commissioner Diaz seconded the motion.

Executive Director report

Chose not to speak to allow more time on the agenda to discuss unfinished business of the study session.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Alice Castilleja-Lara participated in a community forum sponsored by the WA State Patrol regarding racial profiling issues in Yakima. She attended a Hispanic Chamber meeting in which they identified some issues in the community. She was a speaker at an open house regarding farmworker. The open house was sponsored by the farmworker clinic.

Commissioner Becky Diaz is working with Rep. Phyllis Gutierrez-Kenney on the bill for out-of-state tuition for undocumented students. She has been working on a project called Computer Wizards that allows low-income families to get free computers. They also provide computer training for the families in their housing complexes. She has been working with Ramon Nuñez on issues pertaining to the U.S. & Canada border.

Commissioner Mario Reyes is a board member of the Wenatchee Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, which had a recent project through which they helped to get Hispanic people registered to vote. The Chamber is working on fundraising to prepare to give scholarships. He is also a board member of South Wenatchee Community Center, which was applying for a state grant for some property to house the community center.

Commissioner Leo Gaeta was invited to attend a community discussion in which the topic was education. The result of the discussion was to develop two \$500 scholarships for students from the area. The group planned to work on fundraising. There was a focus group established to talk to the families about their feedback on the cuts of medical programs.

Commissioner Edward Davila belongs to Grupo Mexico, which has been working on affordable housing issues within the Hispanic community. Grupo Mexico will be having a workshop on Feb 6th

or 7th the focus of the workshop will be educating people about how to change state and federal laws. Commissioner Davila, Executive Director Ginatta and about 12 other leaders met to talk about academic achievement and the WASL at Highline School District. He announced that Highline School District finally got a grant to fund an adult ESL program.

Commissioner Gabriel Banfi spoke about the growing Hispanic community in Bellevue and mentioned that there are now over 10,000 Latinos in the area. The Eastside Latino Leader Forum (ELLF) has been following House Bill 2330 and racial profiling issues. He has been working closely with Bellevue City Hall so that they can provide Spanish resources for their community.

Commissioner Yvonne Lopez-Morton is currently the President of the Business Association, which gives out scholarships to students every year. The group has been working with the schools and key leaders in that area to figure out how they can work on issues. They have met with school district principals to talk about educating non-Hispanic students about the Hispanic culture.

Unfinished Business

Executive Director Ginatta detailed the Commission's budget and explained the Governor's proposal for co-location and staffing reductions. Commissioner Gaeta told the public that communities should still be encouraged to use community resources and mentioned that they could get those resources from the Commission's web site. A community member asked if volunteer opportunities existed. Commissioner Gaeta responded that the Commission is always seeking assistance. Executive Director Ginatta detailed a couple of volunteer options and recommended that interested parties contact the Commission.

Executive Director Ginatta discussed the Commission memo on official communications by the Commission. The official policy of the Commission is that only the executive director and the chair of the Commission are permitted to speak officially for the Commission. To promote further involvement by commissioners in the workings of the CHA, the memo proposes that commissioners may have the power to officially communicate on behalf of the Commission pending prior approval from either the Chair or the Executive Director.

Chair Gaeta informed members of the public that the Commission's Legislative Agenda was completed and translated into Spanish. Copies were available at the meeting and also at the Commission office.

Executive Director Ginatta raised two issues about the 2004 CHA meeting schedule: first, the 2004 meeting schedule was not established; and the second issue was the suggestion that some meeting locations be shifted for 2003. The Yakima community has expressed concern that the Commission is not meeting in the Yakima Valley. Additionally, the Commission has two new commissioners (one from Vancouver and the other from Spokane) and it would be good to schedule those two cities in the near future to introduce the commissioners to the community.

Commissioner Banfi made a motion to appoint two commissioners to plan the meeting dates for the next two years and to move the March 2003 meeting from Monroe to Mt. Vernon or Bellingham. Commissioner Lopez-Morton seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioners Castilleja-Lara and Reyes were appointed to plan the meeting dates for 2004 & 2005 and to adjust the 2003 schedules.

Public Comments

Cynthia Santiago – Spoke on behalf of the Thurston County Hispanic Round table that meets in Olympia. The past year, professionals have gathered to discuss different issues affecting Latinos in this area and are working on resolving them. She thanked the Commission for taking part in the group. They take one issue at a time and work on it, doing the best to make a difference. She announced that their next meeting date would be on March 20th.

Edward Davila asked that Cynthia work with Director Ginatta on assisting with the recruitment of the Olympia commissioner position, Cynthia replied that she had just scheduled an appointment with him to discuss that and other issues.

Marilyn Jarmon (Washington Credit Union League) – Discussed a new outreach program on financial literacy. She spoke about IR net, an electronic funds transfer service that would benefit Latinos sending money to Latin America. She mentioned that two free phone calls came with each money transmission so that the client could call the receiving party, and the receiving party could call to confirm the transfer. They are currently working with local credit unions to locate the needy areas in WA. The topics of choice are: checking accounts, credit history, and how to apply for loans. She also stated that the people could use the matricula consular as ID as long as they didn't get interest-bearing accounts.

Eva Santos (Deputy Director for Operations, Labor & Industries) – Deputy Director Santos has worked very hard in the last 6 months on what L&I needed to do to make a difference in the Hispanic community. Out of the planning they hired Jose Rodriguez, Spanish language communications manager, to meet with the community to address issues. Deputy Director Santos believes that workers should get fair pay for their labor, that they should have the right to work safely, and that, if injured, they receive timely and equitable compensation.

L&I staff are taking a look at the system to see how they make a difference.

- maybe hiring more bilingual claims managers
- make injury report bilingual
- identify language of preference
- making sure they take a look at translating all documents and information
- outreach and look into what fairs or events are happening to get the word out
- Create feedback mechanism to find out how the agency can provide legal information to their clients

They current have one bilingual claims manager, they want to get six more and place them in Tumwater.

Jenaro Castañeda (Employment Security Department) – Spoke about unemployment benefits and that new eligibility programs available. Temporary Unemployment (TEUC) allows a person to get an

additional 13 weeks of unemployment insurance, and thereafter they can apply for extended benefits for 13 more weeks, totaling 26 weeks altogether.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.